THE MAN ABOUT TOWN.

A Chronicle and Review of the Doings of the Day, at Home and Abroad.

REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

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THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

AN element of strangeness and incompatibility runs through the whole story respecting the loss of the "Carnatic." That the catastrophe should have occurred at all, is, indeed, most unaccountable. Here was a splendid steamer, commanded by an able and experienced officer, who was himself on deck at the time, "keeping," as he says himself, "a vigilant look-out." The sea was calm, the night was clear and starlit, and a lighthouse full in view, if further warning or guidance were required. Suddenly breakers were seen ahead. Then the usual manœuvres were tried. The first order issued was to "wear" the vessel, but the rocks were too near, and the "Carnatic" proved slow in answering her helm. Then the engines were reversed. The plan, if adopted at the beginning, might have saved the steamer, but as it was it was too late. The vessel had been going with engines at full speed, and square sails set, making 11½ knots an hour, and before her "way" could be checked she was hard and fast on the reef. She did not strike—it would probably have been better if she had—but touching upon a shelving part of the reef slid up it by the force of her own momentum until about half her entire length rested upon the coral bottom, while the afterpart hung over into deep water. When we add that the reef in question, though highly dangerous, is laid down in all the charts, and is, indeed, as well known as any of the shoals and sandbanks at Spithead, it is evident that the event cannot be attributed to the hostility of the elements any more than it can be "accounted for" upon any well-digested theory of probabilities. We are, however, getting used to these things. It is just to your well-found ships and skilful commanders, and in moments of the utmost apparent security, that the most frightful accidents happen. So far, then, the catastrophe, if extraordinary, is not unprecedented. But much that followed was both.

The Carnatic left Suez on Sunday, the 12th of September, and got on the reef shortly after one o'clock on Monday morning. As she had sustained no serious injury, but merely stuck hard and fast on the rock, there was no cause for alarm or reason for an immediate abandonment. The passengers, accordingly, who behaved admirably throughout, collected such hand-luggage as they could easily secure, and waited for daylight. When that arrived the situation was seen to be as we have described—the steamer inextricable stranded, but with no pressing risk of breaking up, with a sea still perfectly calm, and the Jubal Island only four miles. Not a life ought to have been lost or even imperilled under such circumstances. Yet the list of "missing" amounts to 29, every one of whom has perished through what appears the unaccountable, not to say perverse conduct of the Captain himself. Through the whole of Monday he refused permission for any one, even the lady passengers, to go on shore. The boats were already lowered, with provisions and water on board, prepared for immediate service. The passengers, on their part, were ready, and many of them anxious to land. There were, happily, not many of them, only about 33, all of whom could have been taken ashore in a single trip. But the commander declined to give the order, and the passengers therefore remained another night on board the wreck. All this while matters were growing rapidly worse. The steamer was dry at first, but "bumped" heavily, and at length started leaks, which increased from hour to hour. As she lay on an incline the water found its way aft, and added enormously to the weight of the unsupported half of her length, thus creating a transverse strain, which by Tuesday morning it was manifest would not long be sustained. Even then the order for passengers and crew to take to the boats was postponed until eleven o'clock, and while this operation, which was necessarily a slow one, was still in progress, the long-expected catastrophe took place, the vessel broke in two amidship, the after part going down immediately in deep water, and where it was followed very speedily by the forward half, which was either shaken clear of its hold on the reef, or dragged down by some remaining attachment to the heavy stern compartment. The scene that followed we need not describe. Enough to say that an operation which only an hour before might have been accomplished at leisure and with perfect security was accompanied by intense alarm, and suffering, and peril, culminating in the loss of nearly 30 lives.

Through the whole affair the great fault of the Commander was that of being "too late." He tried to "wear" his ship when it was too late; he reversed the engines when that manœuvre was too late; and he delayed the order for the boats until too late. In each case it was a question almost of minutes. But how much depended on those minutes?

Apropos of Fenianism — though somewhat late in the day—a copy of the old oath taken by the "Ribbon" men in Ireland has been disinterred and printed at full length. It is a curious document in several respects. In mere length it is very formidable—at all events to the votant, or execrant, or whatever title should appropriately be assigned to the taker of the oath, It is much longer, for example, than the Athanasian creed, which it somewhat resembles, being very minute in its definitions, and emphatic in its anathemas. In taking the oath A B vows all sorts of obedience to the laws and institutions of the officers of the "society," plights his troth, in the most solemn strains, that he will tell lies without end, and commit unlimited perjury, if required for the interests of the Society or the safety of a brother Ribbonman. There is much more of this, which we need not recapitulate. It is, however, somewhat reassuring to know that when conspirators, or rebels, really mean "business" they are not wont to be long-winded. The French Revolutionists, for instance, were terribly in earnest, and they were also prompt in action and brief in speech—"Death to tyrants," "Aristocrats à la lanterne," "Mort sans phrase;" and such brief utterances were found to be quite sufficient stimulus. When rebellion becomes prosy it is nearly as good as dead—and then, like Tom Thumb, we may go to breakfast.

England has hitherto nobly maintained her high position among civilised nations, as for all other productions, so also for her annual "crop" of crime and calamity of nearly every description. We say "nearly" because there are some special categories of crime which we never see in the home market. We never form plots for the assassination of a despot — probably because we have no domestic despot to assassinate; and it has somehow not yet become a custom with our line regiments to turn out into the streets, officers and all, abjure allegiance to the reigning sovereign, and open fire upon the peaceful citizens. But, barring these exceptions, our beloved country has honourably held her own in everything that could be called criminal or homicidal, or destructive generally, whether above ground or under, whether by land or water. This superiority is, however, just now challenged very seriously in more than one quarter; and if we do not take care, and strenuously exert ourselves to produce some proof to show that we are not actually distanced in the race, the chances are that we shall suffer a total and most deplorable loss of *prestige*. Look at the intelligence received only during the past few days. We must turn back through many volumes of the Annual Register to find any event that can be presumed to match with the Pantin tragedy. Even our mining catastrophes — a department in which we ought to enjoy an uncontested supremacy—have recently been subjected to a competition from the foreign produce much too close to be agreeable. In theatre-burning again, we have not done badly within the last dozen years. Yet the destruction of the Dresden Opera House, taken altogether, beats anything witnessed either in Covent Garden or the Haymarket, out and out. Then to crown all, comes the conflagration in Bordeaux Harbour, to which we must confess our inability to find, and hopelessness of hereafter providing, a parallel. In peace this event has presented a scene which in its lurid splendour even war could not match. The destruction of the ships and arsenals at Toulon, early in the War of the Revolution, was regarded as being something remarkable in the way of incendiarism; and it was remarkable also as being an occasion at which Nelson and Napoleon, each young in their respective careers, were both professionally "assisting." But petroleum was not known in those days, and conflagrations of every sort must be regarded as incomplete without the presence of this wonder-working combustible.

As at present arranged the Empress of the French will leave Paris this day (October 2) on her long-contemplated Eastern tour. Her Majesty will go first to Constantinople; then to Egypt for the opening, more or less, of the Suez Canal; then to Greece, the Jerusalem part of the expedition being postponed; and afterwards possibly to Italy, taking Rome on her homeward. This journey is satisfactory, among other reasons, as showing that the convalescence of the Emperor is thoroughly established. But it is curious to notice the importance which the semi-official Paris papers attach to the pecuniary view of the affair. The tour, they tell us, will be very expensive, costing at least £30,000. But then, on the other hand, the Compiègne *fetes*, held always in October, will this year be discontinued, and as the outlay on these *fetes* was never under £25,000, the extra expenditure will be very insignificant. It is rather funny to notice these occasional fits of Imperial economy. It is not often that despotic Sovereigns, accustomed to toss about the revenues of an Empire at their pleasure, condescend to notice special items of their personal outlay. But when they do, the minuteness of their research, and the careful watch they keep over the smallest outgoings are matters for special wonder. They resemble some historical sinners on a grand scale, who in the midst of a career of stupendous wickedness would every now and then be seized with remorse for some trivial offence, and would submit to heavy penance by way of atoning for an act which, in comparison with other acts of daily perpetration, might almost be considered virtuous.

THE MAN ABROAD.

Paris, 30th Sept., 1869.

THE Prince and Princess of Wales, who arrived at the Hôtel Bristol on Monday evening, went to St. Cloud on Tuesday, and were received by the Emperor and Empress, with whom they remained the afternoon. The Emperor, who has

given up all idea of visiting Biarritz or Vichy this autumn, will in all probability remain at St. Cloud during the absence of the Empress in the East. His Imperial Majesty, accompanied by the Prince Imperial, may possibly make a short visit to Compiègne, where a limited number of guests will be invited.

The Empress, who leaves St. Cloud to-day *en route* for Venice, will be accompanied by the young Duchesses d'Albe, her nieces, and their brother, M. le Duc de Huescar. It is said that Her Majesty's stay in Constantinople will extend over a week. General Fleury's nomination as Ambassador to Russia has been confirmed, upon which *Le Gaulois* has the following *apropos* :—

"Que pensez-vous du décret?" demandait hier à un journaliste tiers-parti un arcadien à convertir.

"Vous le voyez vous-même: il présage un ministère Ollivier-Fleury."

"Bah! à l'entrée de l'hiver?"

The frightful Pantin tragedy still engrosses public attention, and the question whether Tropmann was the sole, unaided perpetrator of such dreadful butchery remains to be answered. Since the discovery of the body of young Gustave Kinck the general feeling appears to be that Tropmann is alone the murderer, and had no accomplices whatever.

It is currently reported that a telegram has been received this afternoon from Guebwiller which states that Haeuslex, the brother-in-law of Kinck, has been sent for by the authorities to identify a body discovered between Bollwiller and Cernay, and that there is every reason to believe that the body which has been found is that of Kinck senior, the father. It is impossible to give an idea of the excitement during the last few days at Pantin and the immediate neghbourhood. The number of persons who have visited the scene of the murder must be counted by hundreds of thousands. Indeed, one would imagine a great *fete* or fair was being held, to witness the carriages, fiacres, *coupées*, carts, and vehicles of every description, that throng the road leading to the place, and crowd the very field of the murders. Stalls, tents, and booths are erected all around, and all the habitual itinerant frequenters of *fetes* are driving a thriving trade. After the discovery of the corpse of Gustave Kinck, the Government gave orders for the field to be ploughed all over, and three powerful ploughs were accordingly set to work; but so great was the pressure of the crowd (upwards of fifty thousand persons being supposed to have been present) that a detachment of troops were sent from the Fort of Ambervilliers to aid the mounted gendarmes in keeping back the multitude. Incredible as it may appear, almost an hour after the whole field had been ploughed over, and where nothing tending to elucidate the mystery of the murders was found, so great was the constant influx of visitors and spectators that the whole plain was trampled down again hard and compact as if no plough had passed over it. The body of Jean Kinck, senior, not having been found in the field, the general impression is that he has been murdered by Tropmann in the woods of Alsace, and that he got possession of the money Kinck was known to have with him for the purchase of property which occasioned his visit to Guebwiller, and this the telegram received this afternoon would appear to confirm. Tropmann, who is confined at Mazas in a large cell used as the infirmary, is in a state of the lowest depression and prostration, and appears disinclined to add anything to the confession, which has been disproved beyond that he had two accomplices whose names he says it is useless to give. "As one head," he says, "is quite enough, why should three fall?" At first he refused his food, but upon being remonstrated with by one of his attendants that it was better to accept the chance he had, even if found guilty, of appealing to the Cour de Cassation and a petition for pardon, reluctantly consented to accept his meals.

As if the dreadful murders that have frightened Paris from her propriety were not sufficient for one week at least to occupy public attention, on Tuesday evening we had the intelligence of a most terrible disaster from Bordeaux. An explosion of petroleum set fire to the shipping, and twenty vessels are totally destroyed, four of which had their cargoes on board. Many others have been more or less injured. All the English ships escaped. The conflagration lasted the whole of Tuesday night and the greater part of Wednesday. The Minister of the Interior, who had been staying at Bordeaux, left for Paris just an hour before the fire commenced. The total loss of property has not yet been ascertained, but it must be something enormous. Last night there was also a tremendous fire in Paris. The Hippodrome, close to the Avenue de l'Imperatrice, near the Bois de Boulogne, was totally destroyed by fire, as also several wooden buildings in the immediate neighbourhood. The cause of the fire has not been discovered.

On Tuesday evening, at the Opera Comique, while M. Barré and Madame Galli-Marie were singing in the first act of the "Petite Faditte," the former suddenly stopped short in the duet. Madame Marie fancying he had forgotten the words, whispered to Barré the cue, but he remained perfectly silent, and appeared completely bewildered. The curtain fell, and it then appeared that M. Barré had been seized with paralysis, and had wholly forgotten his part. It was found utterly impossible to continue the opera, and accordingly an apology was offered, and the disappointed audience had to retire. Much anxiety is felt for M. Barré, who, it is hoped, after some little care may be enabled to resume his *rôle*.

All Paris are running wild about peacocks' feathers, which are being sold at the corner of every street, and men, women, and children of all classes are wearing them in the hats, bonnets, and caps, like the mandarins in China. The poor birds in Les Jardins des Plantes have been denuded of their tails by some cruel rogue, who deserved a curse as terrible as that anathematised by the Archbishop of Rheims on the jackdaws of Ingoldsby.

An American editor having written to Carlyle for his autograph, got the following reply:—"Here is my autograph; much good may it do you.—T. CARLYLE.—Chelsea, 23rd June, 1869." But Victor Hugo's answer to a similar application is better:—"Voici mon autographe—Veuillez donner une guinée aux pauvres de votre localité. —VICTOR HUGO.—Jersey, 2 Aout, 1869."

THE MAN AT MUDIE'S.

TOURIST LITERATURE.—II.

BETWEEN the ordinary watering-place "guide-book" and the well-appointed "handbook" there is, in a literary point of view, a whole horizon of difference. One ranks scarcely above the circular of an advertising tradesman; the other is often entitled, by the accuracy, the research, the industry, and general ability which have been combined in its production, to take a high place in historical, geographical, and sometimes even critical literature. The "Murray" series alone—which is, indeed, the oldest, and still remains, in many respects, the best of the class—could of itself furnish a considerable library of volumes, distinguished alike by the affluence of their information, and the skill with which that information is packed into the smallest compass, and marshalled forth in the way that renders it most readily accessible to the reader.

Yet even with regard to the "handbook" we must reiterate one complaint—that it does not supply the modern tourist with what he most especially wants. "Murray," indeed, dates its existence from a period far away in the last generation, when "touring" was a performance of very different character from what it has since become. In those days, railways, even in England, were few, and *out* of England there were none. Tourists then belonged almost exclusively to a class which, if it still exists, contributes but an insignificant minority to the crowd of travellers that now swarm, autumn after autumn, down the Rhine or over the Alps. Then the journey itself was comparatively slow, difficult, and expensive. It required abundant leisure, ample funds, the ability to endure much physical exertion, and the will to put up, when occasion demanded, with hard fare and very indifferent accommodation. Then tourists, in fact, went abroad for the express purpose of "seeing foreign parts," and, of course, wished, as a fair return for their investment of money and labour, to be enabled to see all that could be seen. For this want, "Murray" furnished a copious and trustworthy supply. The red-bound octavo was the tourist's best companion wherever he went. It was worth a wilderness of "cicerones." Even if some of the information it contained was useless to himself, the loss was not serious. The tourist, for example, who cared nothing for painting or sculpture, would find on arriving—say at Munich or Florence—that many pages in his "Murray" were occupied with an elaborate description of the pictures and statues preserved in the local "musées." But he need not visit their galleries unless he likes. There is no compulsion in the case. On the other hand, if he incautiously accepts the hotel-keeper's eager suggestion, and engages a "guide," he finds himself bound into a state of abject servitude during the whole period of his stay in the place. He must humbly follow his leader in the rounds which day by day he may be pleased to take, must listen to his jabber, swallow his apocryphal legends, and follow his advice in purchasing sundry trophies of art or antiquity, at prices of which, it may be hoped, for the sake of his own peace of mind, that he is unaware how liberal a percentage goes, somehow or other, into his "guide's" own pocket. "Murray" was in every respect better than this. If the information was superfluous, it was, at all events, innocuous and inexpensive. So the British tourist learnt to trust to it, and take it with him in all his wanderings, until, twenty years ago, the "red book" became his accepted sign and blazon at the Continental routes of travel. Even now the dramatists and comic journalists of Paris, who rank next to the Chinese as conservators of ancient ideas, always depict the Englishman *en voyage* with a "Murray" under his arm.

For one thing, we should remember that the great stimulus of "tourism" in the times we are calling to mind has now altogether ceased to operate. When our tourist of the past generation undertook his tour merely because he wished to gratify his personal predilection for what was beautiful or curious in scenery, in art, or in antiquity, there were at least some men who went abroad simply because they wished to collect materials for conversation when they came home again. Having laboriously and conscientiously "done" the Rhine, or the Alps, or Rome, they hope to reap their reward by being able to speak with authority, or lay down the law whenever the talk ran on landscapes, or mountains, or ruins, or art, in the social circles of London which he was wont to frequent. This recompense for his outlay is now no longer available for the Continental tourist. If he attempts such a thing he will speedily come to signal grief. Any rash opinion he may ventilate about mountains, or waterfalls, or picture galleries, or antiquarian relics must be hazarded in miscellaneous society under a risk of serious responsibility. Most probably his *vis-à-vis* at the dinner table, or next neighbour in the *conversazioné*, has gone over the same ground with ampler leisure and better opportunities of every sort; and therefore able to "take him down" if he indulged in any critical airs. It is not now as it might have been imagined in Gay's time, the "monkey" who has "seen the world."

Lord Byron, in his diary of a tour in Switzerland, laughs demoniacally at meeting a carriage in which there was a lady sleeping—"sleeping!!!" as he says with triple emphasis, "while travelling amongst the most magnificent scenery in the world." But the implied sneer was most unjust. The "sleeping beauty" had very probably gone through a hard day's work. She had begun at sunrise, and since travelled many miles in the close-fitted carriage, and walked perhaps four or five up and down places where no vehicle could penetrate. Afterwards she had very likely restored her exhausted energies by a substantial lunch, and then some consequent interval of slumber was a mere matter of course. The Byronic indignation was entirely misplaced. Eight hours, even among the finest mountain scenery, establishes a sense of fatigue scarcely less than if the same time had been spent in attending to spindles and power-looms, and if a poet, such as Byron was, found that under certain circumstances "my lady sleeps—sleeps," he ought to have intruded upon her slumber with a serenade, instead of a sarcasm.

The modern tourist, drawn, as he is, from a different class, and presenting himself in much-increased numbers, requires a very different species of literature for his guidance and enlightenment. He never thinks of "doing" a route, or a country, or even a town; he travels light, and cheap, and fast, and whatever interest

he can spare from the mere personal demands of amusement, rest, and refreshment, is devoted to anticipations of the comforts he may succeed in securing at the end of his journey. To him the closely-packed information of the "handbook" is mere surplusage; it may be all very good and very true, and very cleverly put together; but he does not care about it, and wants something altogether of another sort if invited to expound his ideal of "tourist literature."

OUT-OF-THE-WAY PLACES.

OUT-OF-THE-WAY places; yes, but where are we to find them in these days of high pressure and express trains? Few and far between, I admit; nevertheless they are to be found,—quiet little nooks, known only to sportsmen and artists, where we can yet get a quiet week undisturbed by the presence of our bootmaker, and free from the intrusion of Tightfit, who, like the duck, appears never to travel without his "little bill." Dare I make known the spot that gave rise to these cogitations? Might I, because I have found a haven of refuge, publish it to the world, and so let the eagles into the swannery? On the other hand, are there not hundreds of good fellows whose fate it is annually, while seeking the well-earned tour, to succumb to vulgarity, high prices, and bad cooking, to whom I am bound, as it were, to expose my hand? No! I will deliver my soul; and the joy I have experienced, as well as in me lies, impart unto others. This I am the more inclined to do from the conviction that the *Man About Town* will not fall into the hands of the class it is my sole aim and study to avoid. I hate a crowd, even of the *élite;* much more the herd, who strive to outvie each other by weight of purse alone. These are the curse of those spots which nature, art, or puffing, at home and abroad, has rendered notable. A villa built for a mistress, a cottage rented by a poet, a tree planted by a general or statesman, is enough to "taboo" for ever the spot for all those who, for a time at least, like to be free from Jenkins and his wife. "Every place is full," saith the man of weary soul, "and there is no spot sacred from the intrusion of the great unwashed, or worse—far worse—their employers." Yet it is not so. Out-of-the-way-places are to be found, where as yet the scream of the engine has never sounded, or the guards' whistle been heard, and Cook has never invaded. Dull spots, you will say. Yes, to those who delight in crowds, and lie down and roll in the dust of fashion. But to him who

> Loves not man the less,
> But nature more,

happily, such scenes are still come-atable. For one take M—— (in fact, I may as well be candid and own it is the place which gave rise to these remarks). It is as out-of-the-way as the most unreasonable could desire; in fact, you must post a considerable distance to reach it. From what station, and how far—what expense? Thank you, my friends, it is easily found out, and if I split, the quiet little coach may become too crowded ere another year. No, the iron horse will let in the crowd soon enough without my help; and while the four old "crocks," harnessed and handled in a style to make the coachman of the London and Brighton tear his hair with grief and indignation, are the sole conveyance, we may yet hope to be free from Odgers and Co. That the time is long I do not believe, for on Sunday last, as I took my frugal meal in the coffee-room at T——, there entered a man, got up like an Indian in his war paint, who talked mysteriously of levels and viaducts. Heaven confound them!

What are its advantages? A fair sea, hills quite equal to those of South Scotland, and real old-fashioned accommodation. Of course, different men enjoy themselves in different ways, but to the muscular Christian here are advantages not easily counterbalanced. Luck, by some means or other, dropped me, a time ago, at this snug little place. There is not much to be seen, I admit, save the sea and the hills. But then you meet with nothing save a stray dog that you would rather *not* see. Formosa, as yet, has not invaded the place, and Anonyma is unknown as well as unnamed. The sea is perhaps not so fine as at Scarborough or Brighton; as a set-off you are never called on to accept a brass band as an accompaniment to its sound. Neither are you elbowed by gout carriages, or driven off the line by chairs. You enter the coffee-room of the "Feathers," where, by the way, you can be taken in and done for, not in the sense the phrase is too often used, but hospitably done for, and done well, and sent away full and fervent. You find (at least such was my luck) a man or two down for the Devon and Somerset stag hunting, sportsmen, and, I need hardly add, gentlemen; an artist on his autumn sketching tour, and perchance some tradesman *en route*, who generally finding himself out of place, takes early to the smoking-room and the *Gazeteer*. By the way, I have mentioned the Devon and Somerset stag hounds. If you are wise you will see them. But as you value your neck, ride not. No, the hills (Heaven save the mark—*mountains* is more like it) are impracticable, and the steeds self-willed. Trust not yourself to their guidance over paths that a goat could scarce traverse with safety. Be admonished; order a conveyance, pack hampers with savoury meat such as thy soul loveth, and wine to make merry withal; get a party, the more ladies the better, and drive to Clontsham. There shall your heart, if the day be fine, rejoice within you, and you shall see such a wealth of loveliness, as scarce few other places can show. Fear not that the gay scene will soon be over. No! for hours shall the concert of horn and hound delight thee, from the woods below, while the lurchers are at work rousing a warrantable deer. Many a man of mark you will see around. Statesmen, artists, authors, councillors, and masters of hounds. Many a fair form will grace the pigskin, and disturb the repose of your heart, for a goodly multitude is gathered together. Saint and sinner, for, by cock and pye, he is both the pastor and his flock. Strange personages, too. Mayhap if there I could not show you the "Gentleman in Black," but I will answer for pointing out his first cousin, "The Devil among the Tailors." You stare, but it's a fact. And such a devil too; not the fiery-horned "Auld Cloutie" of Burns, but a benevolent-looking devil—nay, a mild and compassionate devil, whom report sayeth knoweth more of the business in hand than the whole field put together, as, indeed, from his nature he should. And then such tailors. Who would not be a devil in such company?—yea, with tail and cloven foot to boot. Not the ninth part of a man amongst them, but by far the better half. You don't believe this tale, incredulous reader? "Come and see." But luncheons must cease in time, and a stag hid never so cunningly must be found at last. So leaving those who list to pursue the adventurous chase, return easily by the road, and admit that you have spent a pleasant, if not a profitable morning. So may your evening be peaceful and your night happy. Are there no divinities in the place—nothing to worship? Aye, many there be, and well worthy of worship too. Shall I divulge my secret, and tell the shrine on which my heart is fixed? Start not, fair reader; I have nothing even touching on the improper to relate when I admit it is the cook at the Feathers. Think not that I would bow down before mere carnal beauty, which at best is but a delusion and a snare. No golden-haired syren can enslave *me*. I bow before the great priestess of the sublime art. I have reason to believe that the object of my adoration is neither young nor fair. Her voice—I have heard it from afar—is as the sound of Jove in anger, loud and terribly distinct, scattering denunciations around her. Have I not seen an unhappy mailen, for some slight dereliction of duty, sent weeping from her presence? And though the damsel was comely and fair to look upon, I also lifted up my voice and prophecied against her, for I knew my divinity had been outraged. By her first effort my heart was subdued, and exclaiming "This in the wilderness," I made me ready for the feast. Yea, since then when I sniff the banquet from afar I fall down and worship her. If you do not believe me, I say again, come and try. So I am lingering yet in out-of-the-way places, contented, happy, though doing nothing, perhaps in consequence of doing nothing. I wonder if I have yet been advertised for after the manner of Speke. Should anxious friends see this, let them beware; one poster on the walls, one descriptive advertisement—though it were in the *Man About Town*—sends me deeper into the wilds, where acorns and berries and the limpid rill must supply the meat and drink of my divinity. They are warned; let them beware, nor seek to invade my sanctuary. When satiated with good living I will once more emerge from my sojourn in out-of-the-way places.

To conclude, let a little bird whisper one thing in your ear: Though you sojourn at the Feathers, and live like a fighting cock, yet you will not be plucked.

Well, it *is* a bad one, but I am out of practice.

AT THE MUSIC HALL.

THE one thing wanting at a music hall is music. It must certainly have been some wag who first gave the name to these establishments. Almost anything can be had there, from gin-and-water downwards, save and except the one great *desideratum*—music. The "wondrous Léotard," if we remember rightly, was one of the early stars of the music halls, and from thence hitherto these institutions, for the most part, may be said to have been supported on the backs of acrobats. But Léotard, the "wondrous," the delight, and, at the same time, disappointment of the ladies at the Valhalla, has left for a time, and no great star even in his sphere has arisen to supply his place. The phenomena exhibited during an evening at the present time almost baffle description. We have seen the celebrated "Invertebrate Family," who live, and continue to perform the ordinary and extraordinary functions of nature without the assistance or luxury of a back-bone. This has been followed by the hitherto unequalled performances, as announced, of Signor Silvani and his sons, natural or borrowed, who tie themselves in knots, stand on the extremity of the paternal nose, hang on his eyelids, and behave themselves in an altogether abnormal fashion. Then comes the "Prestidigitateur," with his stale tricks, or perhaps some other member of the establishment who undertakes to expose the deception of persons of that description. The "Queen of Serio-Comic" then makes her appearance with a decidedly redundant figure and a shrill voice. What is the point or meaning of the words she utters none can tell, but the style is familiar, and evidently takes with sundry seedy-looking youths with small heads and large shirtfronts, who seem to fancy the song of the syren has been directed specially to themselves. About the great "Manx" who shall venture to speak, although we have heard it said that his very existence was a reproach to civilisation? We say we have seen all this and have asked when the music was to follow, and we have felt on such occasions for the poor conductor, doomed night after night to listen to the vapid nonsense then and there perpetrated. But perhaps that poor, lean, Anglo-German-looking individual, with the lank hair, who presides at the piano, is the most to be pitied. He may have a soul for music, and some little ambition to distinguish himself in the musical world; but what a fate is his—to accompany songs without music, singers without voices, and words without sense! *What* shall we say then? Is there not some excuse, are there not some extenuating circumstances that can be pleaded by the music halls? Is the keeper of one of these places bound to set himself up as a public educator, and probably ruin himself in the attempt? We trow not. The entertainment provided, such as it is, probably suits the public mind, if there be such an unknown quantity, or the public taste, if it have any existence. Of course it may be said, look at the Monday Popular Concerts at St. James's Hall, see how they are appreciated and what they do to elevate the popular taste. But it must be remembered they are really first-rate, and although the price of admission is nominally low, the expenses are paid to a great extent by the high-priced seats. Moreover, we doubt very much whether they are attended by the class of people who either do or would go to music halls. So far as our observation goes we think a St. James's Hall audience may be divided into two classes—those who go because the imperious laws of fashion compel them to do that which is considered the correct thing, and secondly, genuine lovers of music who are not able to afford much, but who can, by being early at the doors and the payment of one shilling, enjoy first-rate music at the expense of the payers of five shillings. No one could provide such performances, we take it, at one shilling per head, and we are disposed to think that they are in every sense exceptional. We certainly have heard even at a music hall a sterling song, not over well sung, which has brought down the house more than all the rest of the rubbish put together; but we fear it would

be a dangerous experiment to have it all of this class, even if it were possible. The advantage of the music-hall style, as we have said, is that they jog on without music, and with an almost total absence of any voice worth mentioning. Then, too, it may be conceded that in some respects at least they may compare favourably with those of a former age. "Sam Hall" is no longer sung; there is dullness amounting almost to idiotcy, but no blasphemy. Whether this is owing to good hearts or weak stomachs we will not undertake to say. We believe that it is very much with music halls as it is with theatres,—good voices or good actors cannot be got—everybody is a "star." The instant a man succeeds in playing the not uncongenial part of a flunkey with decency, he immediately strikes for higher pay or forthwith takes a tour n the provinces as a "star." It is impossible to keep a respectable company together—everybody supposes himself or herself a genius, and the price paid for mediocrity only, is something enormous. It is the same in the musical world—the sums paid for a man or woman for singing are almost unheard-of in any other walk of life; and the airs shown are really refreshing. After all, so far as his own merit is concerned, a man might as well plume himself upon a long nose or upon the want of a properly-regulated vision, as upon his voice, except that a good voice is decidedly the most pleasant possession. Occasionally, too, it must be said that there is melody in some of the music-hall compositions. Witness the way in which they pervade the town afterwards; and even from time to time we have detected a glimmer of humour in some of the performers that was worthy of a better part. At the present moment there is one very bright exception to the general run of music-hall singers, actors, or actresses; we allude to Nelly Power, who is both *piquante* and clever, and is altogether fitted for something better and higher than a Canterbury Hall performance. The money, however, does it, and we doubt not it pays her very well to remain where she is. Competition does not always answer. In former times an actor must act at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, or not at all. In these days a man who wants thirty shillings instead of a pound a week, upon denial proceeds to open a rural establishment, with himself in all the principal parts. The tendency at the music hall now is to go in almost exclusively for Ballet; and no doubt for some of the reasons we have mentioned. Voices cannot be obtained, but legs can, and certainly there was lately at the Valhalla a *première danseuse* who—but we forbear; we are treading, we feel, upon delicate ground. There is only one pen that could do this subject justice—but one that can treat with the hand of a master that most tender and delicate subject the leg of the period; and we despair of bringing up the editor from London-*super-Mare* for this purpose. It must not be forgotten, therefore, in considering the management of these music halls, that the principal difficulty in the way, is the price. Probably many turn in there, who are driven away by the absurdly high price of the seats at the theatre. During a lucid interval a man does not care to pay seven shillings for a stall and one shilling more for booking, and this to see a few mediocrities in very common-place characters going through their parts in a very common-place way. It is an attraction to be able to smoke; or for a bachelor to be able to get his supper quietly at Evans's. These are the charms of the Music Hall, such as they are, which might possibly not be compatible with music of a high order. Do we say, then, that nothing can be done to improve the present state of things? Far from it. Much might be done. The atmosphere of one of these halls is essentially snobbish—there is the odour of the bagman about it. It is there—although it seems almost inconceivable—that it is considered fast to stand brandy and cigars to Mr. Tom English and others of that form. Indeed, certain "gents" may be seen visibly to rise an inch or two in their boots on receiving a nod of condescending recognition from one of the performers, or from the bloated individual who is perpetually announcing that Miss Louise Portington or Mr. George Braybourne will "sing again, gentlemen." There is plenty of room for reform here; but one of the first steps we should recommend would be the discharge of anyone, "great" or otherwise, who was wholly unacquainted with the proper position of the aspirate.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SIDEROLITE.—We shall be glad to hear from you again.

WHICH IS WHICH? LITERARY DISHONESTY, and several others, are informed that the "Man About Town" writes exclusively for this paper. The announcement in the *Sporting Times* is quite unauthorised, and calculated only to mislead.

X. L.—We can't think you do—at all events, in that line.

QUEEN'S MESSENGER.—When you adopt a reputable signature we shall be happy to answer your question.

BIVALVE.—Wilton's, in Ryder-street, and Rule's, in Maiden-lane. There are others, but these two would give the rest three dozen and a beating.

BIRD OF PARADISE.—Your tail is too long for us.

The Man About Town.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1869.

I DO not believe in big things. Of course I know that there are whales, giant specimens of Kohl Rabi, colts by King Tom, Russia, and the jubilee festival at Boston. Miss Swan, that *rara avis*, was essentially a big thing; so was Chang; and so (though known now by his sandwiches and ale alone) was, if tradition may be believed, Daniel Lambert. They have—or had, no doubt—a distinct and well authenticated existence; but, I repeat, I do not believe in them. If plainer English be desirable, I don't like them. The very instances I have strung together at random, from the tasteless and insipid mammoth vegetable to music which consists of the rumbling of cannon, and the clinking of anvils, may furnish some explanation and justification of my feelings. A whale is notoriously a great, foolish, blubbery, bottle-nosed beast. Brobdignagian vegetables are invariably as tasteless and watery as a kiss from your sister. The Baron's horses are of no use—at all events, to any one but their owner. Russia is not a country I should care to be bound in, or to; and American music (including the springing of mines) I hold in the utmost abhorrence. With Chang (who was, I believe, a porter at Singapore, and no more a mandarin than I am a doctor of divinity) I would never shake hands. And fancy ascending the altar with Miss Swan in tow! No; moderation, and medium flavour in all things.

And this brings me to the statement that I like not the Grand Hotel at Brillville—nor, indeed, grand hotels at all. I object to being moved by machinery to begin with; I don't like the "manager," who has put the rubicund nose of mine host out of joint (or joints); I have a weakness for being attended on, and I like my food to be served—like my temper—hot, quick, and without hitches. I do not care about being a unit in a long corridor, with a 32nd part of a chambermaid (when she hears you) at your disposal. I can't stand English *tables-d'hôte*, where one's neighbour is either a bagman himself, or thinks you one, and where you have to sit for two hours over a dinner worth 20 minutes. No. 1 in a modest inn rather than No. 365 in a Grand Hotel for me—ay, even though a hairdresser be retained on the latter establishment, and the bells ring by electrical arrangement. I think, as Dr. Collier says of the aperient bolus of the immortal Cockle, "no better and no worse" of our Grand Hotel, because it is given over a prey and a spoil to two great peoples, to neither of which do I belong.

Those nations, the Hebrews and the Americans, appear to have taken big hotels into their especial favour. The drawl of "Bawston" and "Ne Yock" is the most familiar sound in both the Grand Hotel at Paris and the Langham, where I have seen as many as six pairs of boot soles protruding from the smoking-room windows at once. Timotheus P. Buggins affects the Grand at Brillville also, but not so keenly as the Jewish gentleman who has, indeed, "come to it, loved it, and made it his own." There is scarcely a ham cut there now for breakfast; and a waiter informed me that if crackling came into the coffee-room he would not answer for the consequences. At a medium-sized caravanserai you escape these violent influxes of faiths and nations, and can eat your griskin and take your brandy-and-water—without smashing, cock-tailing, stone-fencing, or eye-opening—in peace. If the Grand Hotel, however, be not good (to my thinking) in itself, it has been the cause of excellence in others, the brilliant appearance of the stranger having made its smaller rivals go to the glass. The "Norfolk," so long the head-quarters of dinginess, has stuccoed, and burnished, and gilded itself out of all knowledge. The "Bedford" has an *interprète* with a gold band; the "Albion" has a new iron manager and civil bedsteads; all have sewn a ribbon on, or pinned in a flower to make themselves worthier the lift, and the balconies, and the Restaurant, limited.

But what is this which rises before me like an apparition of an armed (calve's) head, in mute condemnation of my rash and too general assertion? This is "Mutton's," to look at which is hunger, to long after which is inevitable, to enter which is indigestion for a fortnight, unchanged and unrivalled as of old. Never were there such tenderly-tinted hams, such glazed and curled tongues, such pink and white beef—a complexion solidified,—such pies, such tarts, such cheese-cakes! "Mutton's," the profane will whisper, has been famous no less for assignations than for luncheons, and that all who go into that mysterious back room have something in their eye beyond gravy and chocolate drops. It may be. I have seen many a comely maiden and many a manly youth sitting under the shadow of those hams; have marked many a one down there myself; have watched him of Nerbudda take in as many as six strangers of an afternoon, and walk abroad, after disposing of the last, in search, like Mr. Robertson, of Parisian or other novelties. But if it be so, love-making, which we once believed was apt to deprive its votaries of appetite, must be a healthy, hungry—not to say ravenous—pursuit; for I never saw young man or maid who was not tranquilly munching, and absorbed far more in the "sweet things" supplied by Mutton than those offered by Calf. People may go there to "spoon," I am far from "denieging of it"; but it is generally in connection with a basin of savoury Mulligatawney, and under the immediate eye of the waiter. After all, lovers who commence with a substratum of nourishment are wise in their generation. For does not a past master in the craft sing—

> "Some aid they got from Ceres and from Bacchus,
> Without whom Venus will not long attack us"?

Talking of Lord Byron reminds me that *cartes de visite* of that noble poet, his wife, and Mrs. Beecher Stowe are just now breaking the monotony of our print shops, generally devoted almost exclusively to studies of the noses and whiskers of the local clergy. "George Gordon" is represented in that airy, second-mate kind of attire, with dishevelled hair and streaming neck-tie, which so materially assisted his popularity among young ladies. Arabella, Lady Byron, has a tragic air and a gauze head-dress, and looks very much like being busy with the partner of her bosom if he should hint at a latch-key. Mrs. Stowe—well, Mrs. Stowe is living; therefore I shall not say what I think of her, except that I fancy she wears a front. "Anyway," as her countrymen would say, she has managed to get a good many people's frills out. It will not, I may add, *par parenthèse*, soften the angry feelings she has aroused when it is learned that she "reserves for the present" all answer to the

criticisms evoked by her cruel slanders of the hero of the white trousers and black necktie.

The case of Byron et Uxor was, I see, made the subject of a sermon preached last Sunday in London. Unless my ears deceived me, I caught something like an allusion to it by the blue waters here on the same day. Sunday is by no means a *dies non* at Brillville, either spiritually or temporarily. We do not (foreigners and Jews excepted) drive about much, nor do residents care to go "allonging and marshoning" as on secular days. But the influx of visitors who have paid their three shillings for eight hours' pickling is prodigious, and they have no such scruples. For their behoof the miserable flies are kept shambling between Hove and Rottingdean; the ear-ringed mariners put forth the "Two Brothers" or the "Good Intent"; and, less, perhaps, to their satisfaction, but quite as energetically, the *al fresco* preachers lift up their voices in admonition. Such an one I came across last Sunday, venting evangelical truths at the top of his hoarse voice with such hearty goodwill that, as I calculated, another ten minutes would have left him a perfect raven. He was unmistakably in earnest; therefore I will say nothing against him, except to hint that such exhibitions, in the absence of a Whitfield or a Wesley, are apt, especially by a lightminded seaside audience, to provoke more irreverent merriment than the wholesome self-examination which the gentlemen who give out 'ims no doubt conscientiously seek to arouse. Now that female penitents have taken to narrating their experiences of life "on the pavement" to open-air audiences, it is a serious question whether the whole matter should be placed under the jurisdiction of the police. At Brillville, where they keep so many tame clergymen, a wild one or two may be tolerated, but in some places the interference of existing rights would not be fair.

These same Sunday excursionists are a great thorn in our flesh. At early dawn on the seventh day they descend on us like a swarm of locusts.

No wonder the quiet residents shrink from facing the band of wreckers which sits down before their gates, stone jar in hand, and eats something out of its handkerchief over against them, until paterfamilias locks himself in his back bedroom until the hour for dinner and the return train arrives. When they are tired of eating and drinking (which is not soon) they disperse themselves, smelling evilly over the town, where many pass an hour or two pleasantly in investigating such rarities as it affords in the shape of the Pavilion, the verdigris-coloured statue of the First Gentleman in Europe, the camera obscura, and Turbot's Baths. But the beach is the favoured haunt, the excursionists' leisure, after being made unwell on board the "Lady Sale," being consumed in the acquisition of gelatinous monsters like spoonfuls of currant jelly with legs, and dank strips of seaweed, which will accompany them home at night, and long impart a saline flavour to the parlour, behind the door of which they will hang, to the confusion of Messrs. Negretti and Zambra, a barometer.

But I am wandering from my point, if I ever had one. These rambling and discursive remarks will, very justly, have irritated all classes of readers; both the serious division, which desires to learn the favourite for the pulpit stakes, and that more frivolous casting-net which seeks for information as to what is going on at the oyster-shops, the circulating library, the bazaar, and other places of gay and fashionable resort. To the former I can only oppose respectful silence, my Clergy List having by some accident been left behind, and my health last Sunday not having been sufficiently rehabilitated to permit my comparing heads and treatment (which sounds like ringworm) as I could have wished to do. As to secular amusements, I can report none fully. It is with the utmost satisfaction that I am able to announce that the camera obscura stands where it did. I can state positively (friends at a distance will please accept this intimation) that the bazaar on the chain pier has added a doll's-house and two Noah's arks to its *répertoire*, which embraces, as usual, all that is newest and liveliest in the way of barking dogs, battledoors, and musical wagons. A family of tumblers—very nearly the half-dozen, richly-cut — go through some chaste evolutions on the beach; where also a professional gentleman with a fine head of hair imitates the feathered songsters of the grove—like a bird. Several of the itinerant "entertainers," who go to and fro wherever there is a town-hall and a population capable of filling a front row at three shillings, have come and gone; carrying with them some specie and the mild approval of people too tired with exercise and saline draughts to be critical.

We have also been harped at, conjured at, sung at, can-caned at, and have undergone most other kinds of discipline, only tolerated because the venue is London-super-Mare, instead of London. Truly the sea need be a potent enchanter to counterbalance all the miserable flotsam and jetsam with which it is encumbered and overlaid. And lying, as it now is, in great, tranquil, green and violet belts, with here and there a tiny white sail almost motionless on its breast, the whole (as they say of theatres) lighted and warmed by the new solar apparatus, it *is* an all-sufficing pleasure—"a thing of beauty and"—*vide* Keats.

Almost while I write the sky has clouded angrily, the violet and green have deepened into a murky indigo, the sunlight is quenched, the gulls, sprung Heaven knows whence, begin to flit restlessly along the shore; the wind is rising, the rain is falling, and desolation begins to be felt from the water's edge to the misty sea-line. Even in this aspect it is worth a legion of acres of brown heath, furze, or even mangold, lucerne, or clover — especially if seen through closed windows, with hot water and "O, be joyful" at hand, for the relief of your foot and mouth disease.

London Lyrics.

No. IV.

THE BATTLE OF THE BILL-MEN.

THE discounters of London
By the rod of Aaron swore
That as they had been done of late
They would be done no more.
By Jacob's staff they swore it,
And named a trysting day
When all should meet in Jermyn Street,
And gird them for the fray.

East and west, and south and north
Is the secret "office" sent,
And heard by the tribe of Levi
With ominous intent.
Woe to the race of Hard-up,
Whose bills are overdue;
Long time, I say, this fatal day
Shall the impecunious rue!

The kites and eke their jackals
Come pouring in apace,
And in the street of Jermyn
Is many a startled face
Of marching sub and captain bold,
As gazing from the sill
He sees the aged Jewish man
Who holds his little bill.

From chambers on the first floor,
From second and from third,
From suburb and from stifling street
Come forth the ravening herd.
From many a West-end mansion,
From many a City slum,
Alike bent on destruction,
Both Jew and Gentile come.

From the far shores of Surrey
The nailer quits his lair,
And from the street of Maddox
Sneaks the crafty *homme d'affaires*;
From discount bank, and office,
In questionable "Co."—
What boots it now to tell their name?—
The hungry harpies flow.

From the dim square of Leicester,
Where shines dark Eblis' hall,
The home of the unshorn Teuton,
The haunt of the unwashed Gaul;
From where proud Percy's lion
Lifts high his haughty crest,
And looks with scorn on the den below
Where the "pricker" hath his nest;

From the proud square of Berkeley,
Where swindles scared the town,
The hated Hill with bond and bill
Hath struck the proudest down;
And from the Grove well wooded,
Named after saints above,
Where in the strangest harmony
Abide both kite and dove.

Tall are the sums that "Horrus"
Requires for a bill;
Great are the lords who know the way
Through Berkeley up to Hill;
Beyond all else to "Scavenger"
Is the young soldier dear;
Best of all fools dark "Gripus" loves
The soiled dove and her *frere*.

But now no needy baron
Taps Horrus for a bill;
Sad are the lords who come to do
Their bits of stiff with Hill;
His course away from "Scavenger"
Must the young soldier steer;
And Gripus parts with nought to-day
To the soiled dove and her *frere*.

There be thirty needy lawyers,
The dirtiest in the land,
Who alway by the discounters
Through good and evil stand.
Evening and morn the thirty
Have turned the law books o'er
Which treat of the ills of doing bills,
By mighty "Byles" of yore.

Now with one voice the thirty
(Worst scoundrels of them all)
Cry, "Process take, and no mistake;
Write writs we'll serve them all,
To meet in the halls of justice
Hard by the silvery river,
Where in the majesty of the law
Sits Cockburn, the lawgiver."

Now have the thirty lawyers
Sent forth their clerks and writs,
To call the impecunious
To where great Cockburn sits.
But the judge's brow was sad,
And the judge's speech was low,
As darkly looked he at the writs,
And muttered, "Here's a go!
Oh, Martin, brother Martin!
Does it occur to you
How oft this child jumped up behind,
While you discreetly drew?"

But in the haunts of fashion
Was tumult and affright,
And to the safer Continent
Men wished to take their flight;
And all around the City
They haste them up and down,
To try to raise a little stuff
To take them out of town.

And sanguine as are warriors
Six-fathom-deep in debt,
Essay to do another bill,
And tide it over yet;
But when they put the question
They were met with shouts of scorn,
And back they hied them to the west
Foreshortened and forlorn.

Our history tells not of that past,
O'er which the cypress grows,
The plunger bold, who dived and sank,
And still undaunted rose.
For him, the chiefest sacrifice
Of Shylock's cursed race,
The Tomb shrieks out for vengeance,
And Mercy hides her face.

But forms as noble even now
Are bleeding by the way;
For them is execution,
Interpleader, and fi-fa,
And every kind of process
Devised by lawyers' art
To clear a failing pocket,
And to wring a proud man's heart.

As in the battle of the lake
The great Macaulay sings
Of carrion tearing captains' flesh,
And pecking eyes of kings,
So round this mighty ruin
Are met the rascal crew,
The lawyer and the agent,
The factor and the Jew.

No relic is so sacred
But must at once be sold,
No pretty toy of girl or boy
But straight be turned to gold;
And yet one note of joy is heard,
For even unto this day,
Like hungry wolves, the wreckers
Are wrangling o'er their prey.

ERRATUM.—In the "London Lyric" last week (third line), for *shyness* read *slyness*.

THE MAN IN THE STALLS.

THE Holborn Theatre, after a brief recess, profitably consumed in complete and tasteful renovation of the house, re-opened this night week for the representation of "works of the highest class of dramatic literature." With the taste of those ever fresh comedies, *Money* and the *School for Scandal*, on our lips—with Mr. Barry Sullivan's praiseworthy determination ringing in our ears, and such a title as *Plain English* in bold capitals on our playbill—we felt small misgivings as to the nature of the evening's entertainment. Legitimacy, and nothing else, was before us. We might not be amused, but we were certain to be instructed. We might not be happy, but we were sure to be orthodox. No French kickshaws were to be placed before us; no slender cutlet was to be forced down by sauce *à la Gymnase*; no feeble dilution of the *soupe maigre* of the *Vaudeville* was to mock our appetite. We were bidden to solid, plain English fare; and we sat down to it with resolution, if not with appetite. The curtain drew up, and before a quarter of an hour had elapsed we found ourselves on familiar terms with *Les Parisiens de la Décadence*.

We have so much respect for Mr. Barry Sullivan's intentions—intentions honourably carried out last season—and so cordially welcomed his attempt to engender a healthier dramatic taste among us—that we are unwilling to characterise the *mistake* with which he has commenced his second season as it deserves. The manager must be painfully alive to the disastrous consequences of such a blunder, and will no doubt be more anxious than any one to hide all traces of his want of judgment as speedily as possible. In the anticipation of the earliest possible withdrawal of *Plain English* in favour of *The Heir at Law*, *Mother Goose*, *Hamlet*, *Box and Cox*, or anything else in play's clothing, we leave Mr. Sullivan to his conscience and his treasurer.

In the meantime we may address a word or two to the diluter, adulterator, perverter, or by whatever name the assailant of M. Barrière may prefer to be called. Robbery without acknowledgment is too much the fashion now-a-nights for Mr. Thomas Morton's announcement of *Plain English* as a *new comedy* to cause any unusual surprise or indignation. The unworthy deception has been practised so long that it would be vain to point out, not, of course, that it is dishonest and unworthy, but that it is *certain to be found out*. The modern French drama is no sealed book; the names of MM. Dumas, Feuillet, and Sardou have not to be hunted out through the pages of the British Museum catalogue; *Les Ganaches* or *Les Parisiens* cannot be hidden away like, for instance, *Aschenbrödel*.

The plot of *Les Parisiens*, the sequel to the same author's *Filles de Marbre*, must be so familiar, even to London playgoers, who had an opportunity of applauding M. Brindeau as Desgenais last May, that there is even less need of reproducing it than the "argument" of *Les Ganaches*. The comedy is clever and effective, abounding in telling incidents and well-contrasted types of character, and seasoned with bright, pungent, sparkling dialogue. Desgenais, the plain-speaking cynic (whose name and attributes are identical with those of Alfred de Musset's creation in *L'Enfant du Siècle*), is the centre round which the lesser lights revolve; the influence of his plain speaking on the false, worldly-minded *dramatis personæ* evolving a story which, in its place, at the time, and among the people in and among which it is laid, is fairly probable and highly interesting.

It is just possible that if a conscientious playwright, with an adequate knowledge of French and some sense of humour, had presented us with a faithful translation of *Les Parisiens*, preserving its scenery, surroundings, and local colour, a piece might have been produced which would have been very fairly successful. Subjected to the enervating process called "adaptation"—which means as usual spoiling the author's plot, flattening his dialogue, and sitting upon his characters—the result is a tremendous and well-deserved failure. Had Mr. Morton been less unjust to M. Barrière, and refrained from misrepresenting that helpless gentleman in every conceivable way, the additions to the text would alone have sufficed to show the unfitness of the "adapter" to be trusted alone with an innocent French comedy. The introduction of the pair of comic (!) servants, and of the ghastly impertinence of Mr. Balaam Gagg, would alone justify the verdict passed upon *Plain English*. Mr. Morton has touched nothing that he has not dishonoured. In translation, excision, and addition alike he has proved himself utterly unable to comprehend his original. It was unjustifiable to withhold M. Barrière's name from the bill, but we should fancy that that gentleman will, when he comes to learn the truth, feel nothing but gratitude for the omission which prevents the connection of, in any capacity, his name with that of Mr. Morton.

As to the acting of this unhappy piece, a few words will suffice to show how worthily the actors have for the most part seconded Mr. Morton's efforts to goad a British audience to madness. Mr. Barry Sullivan did his best with Frank Blunt, but was weighed down by the barrenness of the words put into his mouth, and failed to create any impression. Mr. Lin Rayne showed some promise, for which he was cheered to the echo; as was Mr. Honey, who tried to be droll, with very indifferent success. Mr. Evans was detestable in a detestable part; and the rest of the males were nothing. The ladies, among whom we were grieved to see that excellent actress, Mrs. Hermann Vezin, outraged by a part of superhuman imbecility, may be dismissed *en masse*. The author had effectually provided for *them*. Forty-Jordan power could not put life into Mr. Morton's female lay-figures. Every actress in the "new comedy" has an action for damages against him, and we can only add that if we were on the jury they should be assessed in a liberal spirit.

The Sporting Man.

TURF TALK.

BY "THE OUTSIDER."

THE time of the year has now arrived when a passing allusion to the "fall of the leaf," the approaching end of the legitimate racing season, the necessity of providing hay and corn for the coming winter, and "all that sort of thing," is supposed to be the "correct" commencement of any and every turf article. I shall not attempt anything of the sort, for two (as I think) very good reasons; first, because I never read such *levers de rideaux* myself and therefore should expect no one else to read them; and secondly, because it is always done for a purpose not required by the printer of the *Man About Town*—viz., a want of copy. When it is necessary to fill a couple of columns of this paper with such matter I shall not supply it myself, but apply the scissors to one of G. R. P. James's novels, and so give my readers a feast fit for literary aldermen. But I think they will have to wait some time before they get it—from me. I have often heard the question asked, what is "a real good thing"? Indeed, some half-a-dozen correspondents have written to me this very week for information on the point, their inquiry having reference to my "talk" last week, wherein I informed them that "the Amaranth colt was a real good thing for the Great Eastern Handicap." Those who saw the race do not require any explanation at my hands. A race won from end to end with eight, or rather ten, lengths to the good at the finish was a real good thing with a vengeance, and the long price of 100 to 8 against the winner at starting must have increased its "goodness" to a very considerable extent. Such a runaway race, over a short course, in such a large field, was never witnessed before I should think, for although three or four horses could have finished before Disguise and Dryad, the winner only had to canter to win, and the question naturally arises, where would the field have been if he had been gallopped?

It was certainly a very clever victory for the stable, and a very great one for "The Outsider," and I do not make the latter observation in any spirit of self-praise. I know no fellow scribe will blow my trumpet for me, because all of them took three and some six strings to their bows; so I am obliged to do it myself, and I will do so as shortly as possible. I "crave a reference" to No. 3 of the *Man About Town*. That will say great deal more for me than any "bunkum" I may indulge in, however much I might spin it out.

I must confess that it was a rash proceeding on my part going for *one* horse in a field of twenty, considering the quarter the horse hails from. I knew the trial he had had, made it a certainty for him if he was only allowed to try, but I was afraid of the market, not knowing, as I do now, that all the large commission agents were having the long prices taken off their lists "by letter only"—not by the public, as the commission agents' thought, but by the followers of the stable; and the secret was so well kept that just before the flag fell the horse went to any price in the betting, the public rushing on to Rosicrucian and others under the impression the Amaranth colt was not going to try. The same thing exactly, happened with Fichu for the Steward's Cup at Goodwood, when it was hard to get 8 to 1 about him in the morning, but on the numbers going up 100 to 6, and even 20 to 1 was procurable. I need not add the stable won a good stake, although the owner, who never goes beyond a pony or fifty pounds, was "kidded" to back Sir Joseph's horse, the knowledge of what his own horse did with Mars at even weights not being a sufficient inducement to him to back it in the face of the false rumour of "what Rosicrucian could do with Blue Gown when in receipt of weight from the Derby winner."

All the favourites were out of the race, and Rosicrucian, presuming he was allowed to do his best, must be either a great impostor or he has lost all his two-year-old form. Border Knight, Thor, Vex, and the Vallation gelding were all backed for large sums of money, and were never in the hunt, but two of them at least will see a better day—viz., Border Knight and Thor.

Kingcraft's victory of a short head over Normandy is not so much an assurance of Sunshine's superiority over him as it is an indication in my mind that he has, like so many of the King Tom's have done before him, began to lose his form, and I shall certainly disbelieve in his Derby chance now altogether. Normandy no doubt is an improving horse, but Sunshine would have beaten him by lengths if they had met this week in the same way she did in the July Stakes.

On Wednesday we saw that the Duke of Beaufort was still but half fit, or he would never have finished where he did in the Triennial, and *that* is no doubt the reason why he did not oppose the coughing Pero Gomez in the Grand Duke Michael Stakes.

Typhon must have gone all to pieces since York, or he never would have allowed two such "apologies for racehorses" as Midsummer and Boulogne to show him the way, as they did, in the St. Leger Stakes.

The racing on the third day was even below the Newmarket level. The only event approaching a respectable race, and in which horses a cut above Platers contested, being the Twenty-second Triennial Produce Stakes, which Kingcraft won easily, none of his opponents being of any account, with the exception of Nobleman, who will certainly turn the tables on his conqueror the next

time they meet, as he is not yet half fit, although in little better form than when he ran at Ascot, where he was as fat as a bull. He is well worth taking 1,000 to 15 about for the Derby. John Scott is very fond of him, and at his present price he is the best investment in the race.

Of the running on Friday the only event that calls for any notice is the October Handicap, for which I ran a good second with Royal Rake. Baron Rothschild won it with a favourite, a proceeding to be accounted for only by the fact that Suffolk was put about as lame the night before the race, and all the long prices taken by the knowing ones after he had been knocked out.

It is impossible to pass over in silence the conduct of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington (I like to give him his title pretty fully) regarding the race for the Triennial Produce Stakes, on Tuesday. "Facts are stubborn things," and the following are, I have every reason to believe, the facts of the case. Two horses started for the Twentieth Triennial Stakes, viz., Mysotis, belonging to Mr. Watts, and the Laird, the property of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. When the numbers went up the bookmakers commenced business by taking 7 and 6 to 4 on Mysotis, but the offers increased point by point until 5 to 1 was laid, and when The Laird was seen the betting ceased, for the best of all possible reasons—the horse *was lame*. It has been distinctly asserted that the greater part of the money Mysotis was backed for was his Lordship's. The race, of course, was no race at all; Mysotis came in alone, and the curses of the ring were loud and deep. These are the facts. Now, I ask, what are the members of the Jockey Club going to do? Will they do that which common justice and respect for common decency dictate, viz., insist on a searching inquiry? or will they allow the matter to quietly drop, without making a sign? I will not anticipate their decision. Not a whisper even has reached me as yet that they intend to do anything, but the above facts are, *it is possible*, not yet known to the Governing body of the Turf, so I will wait a while before I speak my mind on the matter.

The betting on the Autumn Handicaps this week has not been of the usual heavy metal that we have been accustomed to find at head-quarters. Of the favourites for the Cesarewitch, See-Saw, Cherie, Miss Peddie colt, The Palmer, Lady Evelyn filly, Gondolier, John Davis and Phantom have one and all been supported for apparently good money; and of the outside lot, Fairwind and Vaccuum have not wanted friends, at a price. Of the favourites The Palmer (who broke down on Tuesday) was, as I stated last week, not in the race; so his supporters are put out of their misery a fortnight earlier than they would have been if the horse had seen the post. The Miss Peddie colt is one of the Baron's good things, that never come off; and Gondolier is a "safe" one. Next week I shall go straight through the Handicap, but I feel confident I shall have no reason to depart from my selections given in the second and third numbers of this paper, all of which have already seen good hedging; in fact, two selected at 40 to 1 are now quoted under 20, and a third will be at the end of next week. The Middle Park Plate has only slightly been touched upon as yet, but my dark one will be tried this week, and if he gets through the task allotted him, he will defeat Sunshine, but should he fail, I believe Mr. Merry's filly, even with the crusher of 8st. 13lbs., will be successful.

IN THE ARENA.

BEFORE proceeding to any new matter we must correct an error in our last article. The "printer's devil" made a sentence to read, "By an enterprising committee of publicans," whereas what we wrote was, "By an enterprising committee or publican. This correction is necessary, as what was printed inferred that the gentlemen who figured on the committee of the meeting alluded to were publicans, which was not the case.

The best method of training for the various athletic exercises now so popular among our youth has become the theme of much discussion amongst all classes of our athletes. Of course with so many professors there is of necessity a diversity of opinion, and we propose to add a few words of our own to the general controversy. Our idea is that as the proof of the pudding is in the eating, so the result of the various races, when viewed in connection with the mode of training practised by the winner, must help towards the solution of the difficulty. If we leave the land for an instant we can give a very recent illustration of the effect of two different systems of training—viz., the late race between Oxford and Harvard. The quantity or form of exercise taken by the respective crews varied but slightly, but their modes of diet were totally different. The Harvard men lived chiefly on fish, rice, &c., almost totally eschewing meat, and for a beverage adhering strongly to the original drink of their infancy—namely, milk. The Oxford crew, on the other hand, stuck to the mutton and beef of England, and indulged in the glass that cheers, and, when ill-used, inebriates. The result of the race conclusively demonstrated the superiority of the latter dietary scale, and it stands, indeed, to reason that a man who takes severe exercise must have adequate support to enable him to do so without injuring the constitution. To the merest tyro the influence of their fare on the rival crews was perceptible, for while the Americans looked strong and "wiry," they lacked that brightness of eye (a sure sign of good condition) and general liveliness which characterised the Oxonians. To return to land, the methods in training for foot races and athletic sports must vary according to the distance to be run and the nature of the performance to be accomplished. There is, however, one point, too often neglected by those about to train, which holds good in every case—viz., that before commencing a preparation it is most essential for the athlete's wellbeing during his training that he be in a thorough state of rude health.

The chief error in all so-called works on training is the assumption that all athletes are possessed of the same constitution and temperament. The old adage of "one man's food being another man's poison" holds true to a great extent in training. The forcing of a certain amount daily into the trainee's stomach when that ill-used organ rebels against its reception has an effect the very reverse of that desired. What would some old-fashioned authorities say if we told them that to our knowledge a certain professional champion pedestrian was allowed, during the last fortnight of his preparation, to live almost entirely on *salt herrings?* The reason for this was that the man himself fancied them. Under the recognised animal diet his "trials" had been daily on the decline, but on the inclinations of the stomach being gratified he speedily returned to "form," and eclipsed, bloater-fed, all his previous performances.

For sprinting, if the athlete be already in the possession of good health, training need be merely nominal, little else being required than practice, and regularity of habits. For long distances training proper comes more into play, although we are decidedly of opinion that the sweating process now so much in vogue is entirely unnecessary. Restriction in diet, and more particularly in drink, is a more efficacious method of getting rid of superfluous flesh than any amount of fatiguing exercise in training flannels. These long journies undoubtedly reduce the weight, but they reduce the strength at the same time, and injuriously affect that elasticity of muscle which is so essential to an athlete's success. More races, both by man and horse, in the present day are lost through over-training and repeated "trials" than by being short of work. Of such minor details as baths, the proper amount of practice, &c., the common sense of the athlete himself is of more service than a whole volume of wordy instructions. We would, however, particularly impress on our athletes the absolute necessity of total abstinence from metropolitan "night air." We think that these few hints as to what the athlete *should not* do may be quite as serviceable as enumerating what he *should* do.

The athletic meeting last Saturday of the Islington Albion Cricket Club called attention to one point, which has been in such sports too frequently overlooked. The unsatisfactory termination of the "open" mile handicap showed the necessity of having duly qualified persons to act as starter and judge. These officials should be chosen for their knowledge of the rules of athletics, and not as a set-off for any monetary assistance they may have contributed towards the meeting. Attention to this in the future will prevent any repetition of the scene which took place on Saturday last, when the judge's process of notation did not coincide with that of three-fourths of the athletes present.

Next week the Richmond Cricket Club (whose spring meeting is justly called the "Ascot" of athletics) hold an autumnal meeting, which may be considered the first meeting of this season of "purely amateur athletes." Although very early in the season, we have hopes that some of the "cracks" may enter for the various open races (entries for which close to-day). If space will allow, we will give a *résumé* of the proceedings in our next.

THE "GOODENOUGH" HORSE SHOE.

WITH all our national anxiety to promote the comfort and convenience of the horse, there is one point, the most important of all, in which we have treated him with something worse than neglect. We have fed, housed, clothed, trained, doctored, and (when necessary) slaughtered him with skill, kindness, and intelligence: we have *shod* him with an ignorant defiance of scientific principles and of common humanity which would not have disgraced a savage in the lowest state of civilisation. The process of shoeing, as well as the form and character of the shoe itself, have for years been the subject of the strongest condemnation among all capable of forming an opinion. It has been obvious to horsemen that the principles which governed both the manufacture and the application of the instrument of torture we have so long nailed to a horse's hoof, were absurd; that a horse's usefulness and comfort were manifestly impaired by it, and that a long catalogue of diseases, among which may be enumerated corns, contracted feet, sand-crack, and thrust, are among the evils to which its adoption frequently leads. The natural action of a horse shod by the Farrier of the Period is altogether lost: his foothold is that of a novice upon ice; he requires to be taught to walk and to trot as much as a bumpkin needs to learn to dance. The chief and manifest defects of the system which produces such lamentable results are referable to the use of the heel calks attached to the hind shoes (which have a parallel in the shoes of the Girl of the Period), which make a horse walk on his toes; the cruel and idiotic practice of depriving the animal of a natural protection by cutting away the frog; and the no less absurd system of applying the shoe hot, and paring away the sole. The plan hitherto pursued has been to run as directly counter to the teachings of Nature as possible. The result of this bungling work is but too apparent in the condition of the legs and feet of our draught horses after a London season. If they have escaped some one or more of the ailments we have mentioned, their bent knees and trembling legs sufficiently testify to the pain and misery caused by the discipline, akin to that of perennial new, and badly fitting boots, to which we have condemned them. The time has come when it depends on the common sense of owners whether their horses shall continue to suffer pain, and themselves loss by the retention of this foolish, cruel, and costly superstition. The "Goodenough shoe," invented and patented by the American gentleman so well known here by his connexion with Rarey, affords for the first time an example of a horse shoe constructed on rational, humane, and scientific principles. Nature has been Mr. Goodenough's guide; and having assimilated, so far as possible, his system to her teaching, he has produced a shoe which may, when contrasted with its predecessor be considered perfection. The following is a brief description of its leading features:—The "Goodenough" shoe is made precisely to follow the outline of the hoof for which it is intended, and to reach exactly to the bars, never projecting at all beyond the heel. Its upper surface is perfectly plane and true; its under surface is generally concave from the outer to the inner margin, the outer margin having, however, a narrow flat bearing upon the ground, and this bearing is interrupted by portions of the margin being cut away, so as to leave a central toe calk, and two smaller calks on either side. The elevation of these calks is inconsiderable, and their general level is the same, so that they may be compared to a series of short claws on the under surface of the shoe. In the

notches, or spaces between the calks, the nail-holes are bored and counter-sunk, so that the nail heads are completely buried in the shoe.

The advantages of the new over the old system are self-evident. The change is from fashion to nature. For the first time the structure of the horse's foot, its capabilities and necessities, have been considered. The shoe is suited to the foot, not the foot to the shoe—a small change, but one fraught with incalculable benefit to horse and man. Among the practical advantages secured to the animal by the adoption of the "Goodenough" shoe, the principal are—first, they effectively prevent slipping, over-reach, and cutting, securing to the horse a foothold which never fails. It never picks up stones nor permits "balling" with snow or mud. It operates as a remedy for contracted feet, corns, thrush, and sand-crack. The nail heads are prevented from striking the ground, the cause of so much dangerous concussion among horses shod on the old plan. To the owner it may be pointed out that they are light, cheap, and durable; that they are made to fit every horse; and that horses so shod on the "Goodenough" principle will travel five miles in fifty further with less fatigue, and draw heavier loads than when shod in any other manner.

These are not random assertions, but plain statements of facts, vouched for by the testimony of countless authorities who have tested the invention in every possible way. For our own part, we can only say that we hail the invention of the "Goodenough" shoe as one of the greatest blessings ever conferred on the horse, and one of signal benefit and utility to every man concerned with horses, who is not blind, ignorant, obstinate, or a farrier of the old school.

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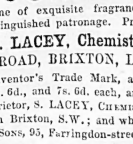
TRADE  MARK

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